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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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11/09/2009

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EXAMINER

POINVIL, FRANTZY

ART UNIT

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/069,403	Applicant(s) HAATAJA ET AL.	
	Examiner Frantzy Poinvil	Art Unit 3696	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 6/25/2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 6/25/2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's representative states that Walker teaches that different types of calls may have different prices but the same types of calls are charged in a similar way for each subscriber, and argues that Walker fails to disclose the claimed different tariff models having different tariff schemes.

In response, Walker discloses many different types of calls. Walker states "Employing a units value enables different charges to be made for local, long distance or international calls, as well as an adjustment to be made for factors such as the time, date and/or week when the call is placed and the like". Thus, these different types of calls are charged differently and would have different costs or values because each of the types of calls has a different tariff scheme as noted by their respective type and based on the date and time a call is placed.

Applicant's representative then argues that Walker fails to teach or suggest that a subscriber's subscription information (or balance information) is associated with an indication of a call type or an indication of how to calculate the charges.

In response, Walker teaches storing units of values for a particular account holder and the values corresponds to different types of calls that may be placed by the account holder. See column 4, lines 36-53 of Walker.

Applicant's representative then argues Walker teaches "how to update a prepaid account when a subscriber is calling. However, there is no mention in Walker of the update being performed differently for different subscribers. On the contrary, Walker teaches the use of the same procedure".

In response, it should be noted that there includes a plurality of different types of customers in the system and method of Walker with each customer calling different places with different plans and/or charges. Thus an update for one type of Customer is different than that for another type of customer.

Applicant's representative then argues that with respect to claims 4, 6 and 8, the Examiner has at least mischaracterized the Walker references in alleging this, because Walker explicitly teaches that the balance of an account, not a tariff, may be in time units, monetary values and unit values.

In response, different tariffs are be presented or stored in terms of value units or charges associated with a type of call.

Applicant's representative then states "Further the Examiner states that "charging or billing one tariff model to a type of voucher would have been left as an agreement between users and the owners of the system of Walker." Applicants request the Examiner to explain how this relates to the claimed invention, in which vouchers are used to increase a balance of an account".

In response, it is stated in the Background of the Invention section of the applicant's specification that "Usually a prepaid subscription is activated and money added to subscriber's prepaid account by means of vouchers. Some of the service providers sell different

Art Unit: 3696

types of vouchers, which differ from each other e.g. in the number of call units and the time the call time bought is valid. However, the calls are charged in the same way regardless of what kind of a voucher is used “. Thus, from this well known teaching, an acceptance to accept vouchers is left between the owners of the system and method of Walker and the customers.

2. The prior Office action is repeated below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3, 9-11, 18-20 and 24-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Walker (US Patent No. 5,825,863).

As per claims 1 and 9, Walker discloses a system and method for providing prepaid and credit-limited telephone services to a user of a prepaid card. See the abstract. The system and method comprise:

maintaining subscriber-specific subscriber information on at least one home subscriber of a telecommunications network (see column 3, line 50 to column 4, line 17 and figure 4 of Walker);

maintaining at least two different tariff models for the home subscribers (local and long distance and international rates and roaming rates), each model containing a tariff scheme defining how to charge different calls (see column 4, lines 37-46 of Walker);

maintaining in the subscriber-specific information an indication of a tariff model to be used with the home subscriber to charge calls, the tariff model being one of the at least two different models and the indicating the tariff model directly or indirectly (column 4, lines 37-46);

detecting the home subscriber is making a call (column 4, lines 18-36 of Walker);

determining in response to the detecting a tariff model to be used based on the indication in the home subscribers subscriber information, obtaining a tariff scheme to be used based on the determined tariff model and calculating a charge for the call according to the obtained tariff scheme. See column 4, lines 47-61.

As per claims 2 and 10, Walker discloses defining one tariff (the local rate) to be a default model which is used when no other tariff model is indicated.

As per claims 3 and 11, Walker discloses the telecommunications network offers a prepaid service to its subscribers and the at least one subscriber is a prepaid subscriber. See the abstract and column 3, lines 22-30.

Claims 18-20 and 24-25 contain limitations addressed in claim 1, and these limitations are rejected under a similar rationale.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4-8, 12-17 and 21-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker (US Patent 5,825,863).

As per claims 4, 7, 8 and 14, the teachings of Walker are discussed above. Walker does not explicitly state attaching one tariff model at least to each of the two different types of vouchers or indicating in the subscriber information the type of voucher this subscriber is currently using and determining the tariff model to be used on the basis of the voucher type indicated in the subscriber's subscriber-specific subscriber information. However, it is well known in the art at the time of the invention that "A prepaid service is a service where a subscriber pays in advance his calls by buying vouchers. The prepaid service logic and prepaid service data are stored in the system...the prepaid service enables roaming subscribers to pay their local calls at local tariffs, whereas the use of the SIM card of their home service provider results in paying international tariffs to their home network and back". Walker also teaches that, tariffs may be in time units, monetary values and unit values. Charging or billing one tariff model to a type of voucher would have been left as an agreement between users and the owners of the system of Walker. The motivation to introduce such a billing scheme in the system and method of Walker I would have been to redistribute types of charges to a credit card or a billing card in case one of the client's billing card become exhausted.

Art Unit: 3696

As per claims 5 and 6, 12, in depositing funds from a voucher or billing card, the user's subscriber information must be checked and if the voucher or billing card is an allowed one (based on sufficient funds or based on correct Id, PIN or password), then continuing depositing and if the voucher is not an allowed one, terminating depositing would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to do in order to prevent depositing funds in a stolen card.

As per claim 13, 15-17, 21-23, Walker discloses a system and method for providing prepaid and credit-limited telephone services. The system and method comprise:

A memory configured to maintain subscriber information on at least one subscriber (see column 3, line 48 to column 4, line 17 of Walker). Walker further discloses using at least two different types of vouchers or payment systems such as a credit card or debit card for making deposits into subscribers' prepaid accounts (column 5, lines 2-17). Walker does not explicitly state attaching one tariff model at least to each of the two different types of vouchers or indicating in the subscriber information the type of voucher this subscriber is currently using and determining the tariff model to be used on the basis of the voucher this subscriber is currently using. However, it is well known in the art at the time of the invention that "A prepaid service is a service where a subscriber pays in advance his calls by buying vouchers. The prepaid service logic and prepaid service data are stored in the system...the prepaid service enables roaming subscribers to pay their local calls at local tariffs, whereas the use of the SIM card of their home service provider results in paying international tariffs to their home network and back". Walker also teaches that, tariffs may be in time units, monetary values and unit values. Charging or billing one tariff model to a type of voucher would have been left as an agreement between users and the owners

Art Unit: 3696

of the system of Walker. The motivation do introduce such a billing scheme in the system and method of Walker I would have been to redistribute types of charges to a credit card or a billing card in case one of the client's billing card become exhausted.

The system and method finding out which of the defined tariff models to be used with a subscriber from the subscriber information in defining how to charge a call would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to do especially in the case one of the subscriber's vouchers become exhausted thus, allowing alternate means or form of payment to enable a call transaction or in the case roaming charges need to be assessed.

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frantzy Poinvil whose telephone number is (571) 272-6797. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 7:00AM to 5:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas Dixon can be reached on (571) 272-6803. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

**/Frantzy Poinvil/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3696**

/FP/
October 9, 2009